(3) Launching of secial projects for protection of Tigers, Rhinos and Crocodiles ;

(4) Initiation of schemes for conservation of mangroves and wetlands including coral reefs ;

(5) Ex-situ conservation of endangered species in botanical gardens to ensure survival of these species under captive conditions for their future restoration in the wild ;

(6) Development of protocols for multiplication of some of the endangered medicinal plants through tissue culture ;

(7) Setting up of National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research ;

(8) Assistance to Government/ semi-Government organisations in States/UTs for cultivation and development of identified species of medicinal plants ;

(9) Enforcement of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 to prevent the diversion of forest land for non-forest purposes ;

(10) Regulation and prohibition of trade and commerce in endangered species of flora and fauna under the Convention of International Trade in Endangered Specils of Fauna and Flora (CITES) ;

(11) Enforcement of Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, which, after the amendment in 1991, includes endangered plants and which now provides strict penalities for infringement ;

(12) Extensive afforestation under the Wastelands Development scheme ;

(13) Promoting the use of non-conventional sources of energy in the degraded areas of forests; and,

(14) Launching of public awareness campaigns.

Ecological imbalance caused by denuding forests

2064. SHRI S.K.T. RAMACHANDRAN : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) what steps have been taken/ proposed to be taken to off set the ecological imbalance caused by denuding forests ;

(b) whether it is a fact that Cherapunji which records world's highest average rainfall in a year lies barren because of very high degree of soil erosion due to heavy rainfall ; and

(c) if so, what steps have been taken to redeem back the land in Cherapuniji, so that one again thick forest could come up to cover the barren peaks ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH) : (a) Various steps taken by Govt. of India to off-set the ecological imbalance caused by denudation of forests are :

(1) The National Forest Policy, 1988 lays emphasis on environmental stability & maintenance of ecological balance. The derivation of direct economic benefit must be subordinated to this principal aim. Besides, there are specific provisions to regulate grazing, control of fire and encroachment.

(2) The Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 was enacted to check indiscriminate diversion of forest lands for non-forestry purposes. The Act has been made more stringent by an amendment in 1988.

(3) The Government of India have been providing Central assistance to State Govts. for conserva-

tion of forests under the Scheme "Development of infrastructure for protection of Forests against Biotic Interference".

(4) The Government of India have also started financial assistance to State Govts. for protection of forest against fire under the scheme 'Modern Forest Fire Cofitrol Methods'.

(5) The Government of India have also issued a circular on Ist June, 1990 to encourage people's active participation in development and protection of degraded forests.

(6) Guidelines have been issued to State/UT Govts. from time to time for protection of forests. Some of these guidelines are as given below :

(i) To aviod felling of natural forests and where such fellings are inevitable for restoration of crop or other silvicultural considerations, it should be restricted to an area not exceeding 10 hectares in the hills and 25 hectares in the plains.

(ii) To consider banning of felling of green trees in the hills above 1000 metres, at least for some years.

(iii) To set apart 4% of geographical area as protected area under Wildlife Sanctuaries, National parks and Biosphere reserves.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Exploitation of trees in reserved Forest above 1000 metre altitude is completely stopped in the region. Plantations were done in the area during 1983-88.

Notices to units in Mehrauli Chatarpur area

2055. SHRI DINESHBHAI T RIVEDI : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 853 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 6th May, 1992 and state :

(a) the names of the units to which notices have been issued in the Mehrauli/Chatarpur area to comply with the provisions of the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 ; and

(b) what action has been taken by the Government in the matter so far ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH) : (a) Notices have been issued by Delhi Pollution Control Committee under Sections 21 and 22 of the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 for compliance, to the following units in the Mehrauli/ Chatarpur area :

(i) Subedar Brick Kiln ; (ii) P.K. Brick Kiln ; (iii) Chandgi Ram Brick Kiln ; (iv) D.R.K. Brick Kiln ; (v) Universal Brick Kiln ; (vi) Ranbeer Singh Panwar Bhatta Co. ; (vii) S.B.I. Bhatta ; (viii) R.L.S.-11 Brick Kiln ; (ix) Roshan Lal and Sons ; (x) N.I.B. Bhatta Co. ; (xi) Maha Luxmi Brick Kiln Works ; (xii) Atray Bhatta Co. ; (xiii) Ranbeer Singh Nand Kishore Bhatta ; (xiv) Saraswati Kiln Works (xv) Inder Lal Suri Brick Kiln ; (xvi) Anil and Co. ; (xvii) Ramesh Chand Brick Kiln ; (xviii) Baljeet Singh and Co. Brick Kiln ; (xix) Raj Kamal Bhatta ; (xx) Jai Kishan Bhatta ; (xxi) Hukam Chand and Co. ; (xxii) H.S. Bhatta and Co. ; (xxiii) Ajay Enterprises and (xxiv) Jaildar Bhatta.

(b) Brick Kilns are seasonal and shifts from one place to another for want of land for suitable mud/earth required for brick manufacture. The steps taken by the Government to ensure compliance by this industry include the following :